

NOTICE OF EXTENDED PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC HEARING FOR  
PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER DISCHARGE PERMIT

Application No. WA-0001317

Teck Cominco American Incorporated  
Pend Oreille Mine  
P.O. Box 7  
Metaline Falls, WA 99153

has applied for a renewal of their National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit according to the provisions of Chapter 90.48 RCW and Chapter 173-220 WAC and the Federal Clean Water Act for their Pend Oreille Mine project.

Following evaluation of the application and other available information, the Department proposes to renew the existing NPDES permit to the applicant, which will continue to allow for discharge of treated mine water to waters of the State. The renewed permit will also allow the new discharge of mill tailings slurry into a double lined tailings disposal facility with leachate recovery and leak detection systems. A tentative determination has been made on the effluent limitations and special permit conditions that will prevent and control pollution. A final determination of the permit conditions will be made following evaluation of all timely comments received in response to this notice.

A draft five-year Permit has been developed which would continue to allow the discharge of treated mine water from dewatering the underground workings to the Pend Oreille River. The discharge currently averages an average daily flow of about 560,000 gallons per day. The wastewater, following treatment, must meet the requirements of the Washington State Water Pollution Control Act and applicable regulations, and the Federal Clean Water Act and applicable regulations for a permit to be issued.

The draft Permit will also prohibit the discharge of process wastewater (mill tailings) into surface and ground waters of the State. The tailings slurry, not exceeding a net amount of 188,640 gallons per day, will be discharged into a double lined tailings disposal facility with leachate recovery and leak detection systems. The tailings slurry is generated from the processing of the mined ore into lead- and zinc-bearing concentrates at the existing on-site mill. This discharge will be required to be in compliance with all applicable Washington State Water Pollution Control Act and other applicable laws and regulations.

PUBLIC COMMENT AND INFORMATION

Based on public requests, the Department will hold a public hearing to take additional written and verbal testimony on the proposed permit. The hearing date will be February 3, 2004 at the Cusick High School, 305 Monumental Way, Cusick, WA. The Department will extend the comment period for the proposed permit to coincide with the public hearing date, February 3, 2004.

Comments should reference specific text followed by proposed modification or concern when possible. Comments may address technical issues, accuracy and completeness of information, the scope of the facility's proposed coverage, adequacy of environmental protection and permit conditions, or any other concern that would result from issuance of this permit. Written comments can be sent to:

Department of Ecology  
Attn: Water Quality Permit Coordinator  
4601 N. Monroe, Suite 202  
Spokane, WA 99205-1295

Written and verbal comments will also be accepted at the Public Hearing.

The application, fact sheet, proposed permit and other related documents are available at the Departments' Eastern Regional Office for inspection and copying between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. weekdays. Copies may be obtained at a charge of 15 cents per copy sheet.

This notice, the fact sheet, and proposed permit are also available for viewing and downloading at [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/permits/eastern\\_permits.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/permits/eastern_permits.html).

Please bring this information to the attention of persons you know would be interested in this matter.

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